

## **Part 613 – Developing Cost Data for Conservation Planning**

### **Subpart C – Maintenance of Cost Data**

#### **613.20 Introduction**

The purpose of this section is to provide States with guidance on the general process for the annual review and maintenance requirements of cost data. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, cost data will be reviewed and updated, as needed, annually and will be maintained at the State level. This chapter provides guidance on collecting, updating, and maintaining cost data, annual reviewing data, and other issues that must be addressed prior to the annual fiscal year upload of cost data.

#### **613.21 Cost Data Annual Plan of Work – Example**

A. This policy proposes certain activities annually to prepare cost data for the upcoming fiscal year. National policy, national conservation practice standards, State policy, and practice and activity costs are likely to influence the specific work that must be done each year to prepare for fiscal year update of cost data. State cost data developers must take into consideration these influences and incorporate appropriate changes into cost data.

B. Updates to cost data worksheets begin at the beginning of each fiscal year. See figure 613-C1 for an example of a cost data annual plan of work.

#### **613.22 Cost Data Quality Assurance**

States must develop a quality assurance plan for developing and compiling cost data. This plan must include a timeline for an annual review process, the items and issues that must be reviewed, and the review methodology. The plan must also identify personnel to participate in the review process and provide enough time for corrective actions to be carried out. Quality assurance plans may be modified or changed from fiscal year to fiscal year, depending on the previous year's findings. The general manual contains guidance on developing quality assurance plans.

- (1) **Cost Data Updates.**—Cost data collection must take place throughout the year. As data become available, planners and developers should document the data for use in developing upcoming fiscal year cost data.
- (2) **Review Methodology.**—All cost data being utilized in the State must be reviewed for appropriate scenario descriptions, data documentation, mathematical errors, and general acceptability. Suggested methodology for this review is to establish a multidiscipline review team to provide assurance that cost data meet handbook guidelines and program policy.
- (3) **Quality Control Checklist.**—Subpart E, section 613.41, contains a sample checklist that States may use to conduct quality assurance reviews. The checklist may also be used by developers as a guide for completing cost data worksheets.

#### **613.23 FOTG Cost Data**

A. Cost data will be included in each State's FOTG for each practice or activity as a cost data workbook. It will be filed in section I, under "Cost Data," and be made available to the public.

B. In the cost data worksheet, all personal identifiable information or references to private businesses, contractors, vendors, or other sensitive data references must be removed from the cost data. NRCS must also avoid any public endorsement or bias toward specific suppliers or trade names, and must refrain from publishing any data source or information that would imply endorsement.

**Figure 613-C1: Cost Data Collection Annual Plan of Work – Example**

<b>State</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Persons Involved</b>
November	Request State Technical Advisory Committee input for next fiscal year.	State Conservationist (STC)
January	Obtain a list of new or updated practices from Conservation Practice Standards (CPS) for the upcoming fiscal year.	State resource conservationist and State engineer
February	Obtain a list of approved practices for the upcoming fiscal year.	State financial assistance (FA) program managers
February	Identify practices or activities needing to be developed (or eliminated)	State resource conservationist and State program managers
Feb-June	Develop or update practice or activity scenarios	State technical specialists
Jan-June	Develop or update practice or activity costs	State economist or State economic contact
	Collect cost receipts from field offices.	
	Contact vendors and contractors for updated information.	
	Obtain updated commercial cost data and software.	
	Query Internet for cost data.	
Feb-June	Organize and work with interdisciplinary teams to develop and update worksheets.	State economist or State economic contact, State resource conservationist, and State engineer
July	Work with adjoining States to ensure that cost data are reasonably consistent across State lines.	State economist, adjoining State economist or economic contact

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September	Finalize and review cost data for utilization in the upcoming fiscal year.	State economist or State economic contact, State resource conservationist, and State engineer
November	Prepare and post cost data information to the FOTG	State program managers